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**SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA**

June 1986

Prepared by the Federal Research Division of  
the Library of Congress under an interagency agreement

Analysts: LaVerle Berry  
Robert Handloff  
T. Robert Lenaghan  
Moses Pinkston  
Rachel Warner

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SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:1

June 1986

East/Central Africa

Gabon

06/20/86

President Bongo grants clemency to all former members of the banned Movement for National Recovery (MORENA) who have been imprisoned since 1982. The presidential decree affects 27 people who had been condemned to prison terms ranging up to 20 years for sedition, and also ends the house arrest of a 28th convict sentenced at the same time.

Tanzania

18/06/86

The government of Zanzibar extends its territorial waters from 5 to 20 kilometers. Minister of State and Attorney General Abubakar Khamis Bakari states that the extension will place the government in a better position to exercise authority over its territorial waters. He points out that the law of the sea is a problem that has yet to be resolved by the international community.

Horn of Africa

Ethiopia

06/06/86

The deputy head of the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission, Berhane Deressa, announces his defection in New York, citing political differences with his government. He alleges that interference by incompetent party ideologues has severely impaired the effectiveness of famine relief efforts in Ethiopia. Berhane's defection follows that last November of his former superior on the Commission, Dawit Wolde Georgis, who now lives in the United States.

07/06/86

The draft constitution of the "People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia" (PDRE) is presented to the public for discussion. It consists of 120 articles, the first of which declares the PDRE a working people's state whose territorial, maritime, and air spaces are integral and inviolable and which will consummate the national democratic revolution and lay the foundation for the building of socialism. Other articles provide for the direct, popular election of a National Assembly, which will establish a state council and elect a president.

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:2

June 1986

Ethiopia/Sudan

01/06/86 According to the Sudanese press, the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) called on the Sudanese Government to take the initiative in settling the Eritrean issue by inviting representatives of the Ethiopian Government and the EPLF to start negotiations. EPLF spokesmen believe that the Sudanese Government is on good terms with both sides and therefore can serve as a mediator. The EPLF announces its readiness to reach an understanding with Sudan on the issue of beginning negotiations, and stresses the importance of solving problems through peaceful negotiations.

Somalia

12/06/86 President Barre asserts that Somalia has no intention of giving the United States access to Somali bases. He adds that facilities made available to the United States so far fall within reasonable limits. With respect to relations with the Soviet Union, Barre notes that Soviet support for Ethiopia does not encourage Somali overtures toward improving relations with the Soviets, which he describes as being less than normal. He hopes, however, for some movement in relations with Moscow. Barre also says that Somalia's only demand is peace and security for all peoples in the Horn, and warns that in the absence of solutions to problems in the region, more conflict and fighting are inevitable.

17/06/86 Radio Halgan reports on two recent clashes between the Somali National Movement (SNM) and government forces in the northwestern Hargeisa area. In the first encounter, SNM fighters killed 35 government soldiers and destroyed a jeep. In the second incident, the SNM killed three government soldiers and captured three others.

23/06/86 President Barre returns to Somalia from Saudi Arabia, where he has been convalescing since being badly injured in an automobile accident outside Mogadishu on 23 May. The true state of his health and recovery remains unclear, although

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:3

June 1986

he has received visitors and conducted interviews from his bed in Riyadh. In his absence, First Vice President and Minister of Defense Mohammed Ali Samantar was in charge of affairs of state.

Sudan

06/06/86 Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi reveals that he will tour several countries, including the Soviet Union, Egypt, Libya, and the Gulf countries, although the only scheduled tour is to the Soviet Union in July. His visit to Moscow will aim at a reduction of the sharp animosity created by the Numeiri government against the Soviet Union and other Socialist countries. It will also help restore balance in Sudan's foreign policy, which is based upon nonalignment.

09/06/86 The Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) reports that its forces successfully raided a government militia training center in Fafajok, Acholi area, in eastern Equatoria Province, on 30 May, killing six government militiamen and wounding many others. According to the SPLA, more than 400 militiamen were scheduled to graduate the next day at Farajok, but the attackers destroyed the training camp. The SPLA claims that this is the second time it has upset government efforts to train militia in Equatoria Province.

11/06/86 A Cairo newspaper reports that the Sudanese Government has officially asked the Egyptian Government to extradite former Sudanese President Numeiri so that he can stand trial on charges of high treason. As an additional complaint against Numeiri, the Sudanese also allege that the exiled leader carries out anti-Sudanese political activities from his residence in Cairo. Numeiri has lived in Egypt since his overthrow in April 1985, and so far the Egyptian Government has resisted all attempts to extradite him for purposes of standing trial.

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:4

June 1986

14/06/86 Prime Minister Sadiq al-Mahdi says that his government wants to hold negotiations with insurgents in Sudan to find a peaceful solution to the country's problems. He stresses that the religious and political rights of the Muslims in the north and the non-Muslims in the south must be guaranteed. He also commits his government to a policy of nonalignment and an improvement in relations with Soviet bloc countries.

17/06/86 The SPLA reports that its forces are continuing to besiege the town of Rumbek, halfway between the southern capital of Juba and the key town of Wau in Bahr al-Ghazal Province which was retaken by government forces from the SPLA on 7 May. Throughout April and May, there was fighting around Rumbek and farther north around Aweil, where the SPLA claims to have destroyed a bridge on the railway line on 5 May, severing rail service to Aweil and Wau.

29/06/86 The SPLA and the National Alliance for National Salvation issue a joint statement at the end of a 5-day conference in Ethiopia, reiterating their commitment to the Koka Dam declaration on ending the civil strife in Sudan. The Alliance assures the SPLA that the Sudanese Government is preparing to implement the provisions of the Koka Dam declaration, which include cancellation of the 1983 September laws establishing the sharia as the law of the land, cancellation of joint defense pacts with Egypt and Libya, the return to the 1956 constitution as amended in 1964, and the lifting of the state of emergency. Both the SPLA and the Alliance anticipate the convening of a national constitutional conference and agree to meet again in the Ethiopian capital after 10 July.

Indian Ocean Islands

Madagascar

06/06/86 Colonel Christopher Raveloson Mahasampo, who was promoted to Brigadier General on 1 June, is appointed minister of defense in place of Rear Admiral Guy Sibon, who died 24 May

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:5

June 1986

1986 in the accident of the DC-3 plane of the Malagasy Navy. Also, Colonel Claude Rasamoely is promoted to the rank of brigadier general and Lieutenant Commander Rolland Ratsimandresy is appointed Director General of the National Military Bureau for Strategic Industries (OMNIS), succeeding General Hubert Andrianasolo, who also died in the plane accident. OMNIS is associated with some American companies in oil exploration in Madagascar. The new defense minister, General Mahasampo, who is President Ratsiraka's brother-in-law, was formerly the head of Madagascar's intelligence service, the General Directorate for Investigation and Documentation.

Sahel

Burkina

17/05/86

Four leftist fringe groups, which have no significant support, are incorporated into the ruling National Council of the Revolution (CNR). The decision of the groups--the Military and Revolutionary Organization (OMR), the Union for the Revised Communist Struggle (ULCR), the Union of Burkinabe Communists (UBC), and the Burkinabe Communist Group (GCB)--to merge with the CNR represents a further weakening of the civilian left as more independent groups are forced either to join the Sankara-dominated CNR or wither away on the margins of society. The only remaining independent civilian leftist group with any concrete base of support, the Marxist LIPAD party, still refuses to join the government.

Burkina/Mali

23/06/86

Tensions rise once again along the Burkinabe/Malian border as Burkinabe authorities reveal a new presence of large numbers of Malian troops stationed near the border. Burkinabe President Sankara notifies the heads of states of the Accord on Non-Aggression and Defense Aid (ANAD), under whose auspices the cease-fire after the December 1985 border war was arranged, of his concern about the Malian forces.

Chad

09/06/86

According to reports, the Codos, the last of southern Chad's guerrillas, may soon join President Habre's government. Attention is centered on the Hope Commandos, one contingent

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:6

June 1986

of the Codos, who are still operating in Logone Occidentale Province. If the Hope Commandos join the N'Djamena government, they will be following a pattern already established by other such groups. In another report, Habre says that it may be necessary to undertake military action without French support to dislodge the Libyans from northern Chad.

Gambia

24/06/86

Two long-standing opponents of the Jawara government, Khalifa Sallah and Sam Sarr, announce that they will form a new opposition party sometime in July. The new party is expected to be militantly nationalistic and very much opposed to the confederation with Senegal.

Mali

06/06/86

An important cabinet shake-up takes place in which President Traore dismisses four powerful longtime members of his cabinet--Minister of Planning General Amadou Baba Diarra, Minister of Equipment Djibril Diallo, Minister of Foreign Affairs Alioune Blondin Beye, and Minister of State Enterprises Oumar Coulibaly. All four were fixtures of the Malian Government and had built up independent power bases over the years. Their sacking reflects Traore's desire to extend his personal control over the machinery of the state. This is also evidently the motivation behind Traore's nomination of his personal physician, Mamadou Dembele, to the newly created prime minister's post.

Niger

06/05/86

Several hundred Nigerien Tuaregs, who had settled illegally in Southern Algeria, are expelled and forced to return to Niger. This move follows by several days an earlier expulsion of 2,000 Nigerien nationals from Libya. President Kountche downplays the diplomatic repercussions of the Libyan and Algerian actions by declining to call them "expulsions," and instead portrays them as the customary exercise of immigration controls. Nevertheless, the addition of this number of indigent persons into the already impoverished Nigerien economy is another headache for the Kountche government.

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:7

June 1986

Southern Africa

Angola/South Africa

05/06/86 South African frogmen attack ships and oil storage tanks in the southern port of Namib, marking a fresh escalation of South African aggression against Angola. The frogmen enter the harbor on a missile-carrying launch carrying Israeli-made Scorpion missiles which are fired against three oil tankers, two of which are destroyed. South African frogmen have been used in several sabotage attacks in recent years, including an attack on Luanda's oil installations and harbor, and last year's attack on the US-owned oil facilities in Cabinda.

Botswana/South Africa

14/06/86 Gunmen attack a house near the capital, Gaborone, killing one Botswana national and injuring two others. Although nobody has claimed responsibility for the attack, observers in Botswana are convinced that it is the work of South African agents, acting to eliminate African National Congress members. The South African Defense Force denies any involvement in the attack.

Lesotho

13/06/86 The government deports 63 South African refugees, including members of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Pan-African Congress (PAC). The refugees are accepted by Kenya and Zambia. The move is the second mass expulsion of South African refugees by the government which seized power last January, and the first time that PAC members are included in the expulsions.

South Africa

10/06/86 Bitter fighting breaks out again between rival black factions in Cape Town's Crossroads squatter camp as conservative vigilantes set fire to shanties. Reporters describe the renewed fighting as even fiercer than the previous battle in May which left 48 dead, and repeat accusations that the police side openly with the vigilantes

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:8

June 1986

against radical leftist groups whom they want to drive out of the area. At least two journalists are wounded and one is killed by the vigilantes. The renewed bloodshed in Crossroads comes as 900 leading businessmen publish a suggested reform program calling for black participation in the government and rapid advancement in the economy. Fierce clashes also break out between rival black groups in Alexandra township after a militant black leader, Mahlomola Mabizela, is killed.

11/06/86 The United Democratic Front (UDF) calls for mass disobedience of official orders prohibiting commemorations of the Soweto uprising on 16 June. The call coincides with a third day of fighting in Crossroads, where Bishop Tutu sought without success to mediate between rival black groups. On 5 June, Bishop Tutu had also urged the nation's churches to defy the government ban on commemorations which seemed to set the stage for a confrontation between the church and the government and has cost him the support of some of the Anglican Church's white laity.

12/06/86 The government imposes a nationwide state of emergency, banning all unauthorized political gatherings, giving police sweeping powers to make arrests and detain persons indefinitely without charge, and putting stringent restrictions on local and foreign press coverage. President Botha defends the emergency powers, calling them necessary to combat the climate of increasing violence and to prevent radical and revolutionary elements from staging acts of sabotage and terror on the 10th anniversary of the Soweto uprising. The restrictions come only 3 months after Botha lifted the emergency imposed last year on three of the country's major urban areas. The new rules are considerably more sweeping because they apply to the entire country and give the government even broader powers. Many activists who had gone underground in recent days in anticipation of the crackdown eluded police, but among those arrested are several senior UDF leaders, clerics, top trade union officials, leaders of the country's anticonscription campaign, and seven high-ranking officials of the Azanian People's Organization.

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:9

June 1986

Southern Africa

South Africa

13/06/86 Three UDF leaders, Henry Fazzie, Stone Sizania, and Nkhuseli Jack, emerge from hiding to announce at a prohibited news conference that blacks will protest the 12 June declaration of a state of emergency with a rent boycott in the Port Elizabeth area. Boycotts are prohibited under the new emergency regulations, but black leaders and white businessmen say the use of consumer boycotts have been very successful in the past. Residents of black townships pay rent to local governing bodies.

14/06/86 A car bomb explodes in Durban, killing 4 and wounding 60 others. The explosion is one of the largest since a car bomb explosion killed 19 people in Pretoria in May 1983. Many observers view the bombing as a response by the ANC to the emergency decree of 12 June.

16/06/86 Millions of blacks stay away from their jobs in commemoration of the 1976 Soweto uprising, bringing the country's major cities to a virtual standstill. Observers estimate that the 1-day, nationwide general strike is at least 90 percent effective among blacks in Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth, and Pretoria; 80 percent effective in Cape Town; and between 30 and 40 percent effective in Durban. There are few reports of violence, although information about Soweto and other townships is limited severely because of emergency orders issued in the morning by the police, banning reporters from all black townships.

21/06/86 The police, invoking the emergency decree, announce new prohibitions affecting 119 political and church groups around Cape Town, including the UDF, the Azanian People's Organization, and the End Conscription Campaign. They also cover the country's largest black labor federation, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU). Under the prohibitions, none of the designated organizations is permitted to publish pamphlets or posters, nor can any of

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:10

June 1986

their officials be publicly quoted in six magisterial districts around the city.

21/06/86 In a bold act of apparent reprisal, suspected ANC guerrillas kill a black police commander whose officers killed 11 political protesters on a soccer field in the Winterveld squatter camp northwest of Pretoria 3 months ago. The killing marks the first time in recent history that there has been a reprisal assassination of a senior official in the country, although low-ranking black policemen have been the targets of many attacks in the past 2 years. Other violence takes place in Durban, where three bomb explosions rock the port, one of them bursting an oil pipeline near a refinery, setting fire to the oil. The explosion, thought to be the work of ANC guerrillas in retaliation for the government's massive crackdown since the 12 June declaration of the state of emergency, results in no casualties.

23/06/86 Four black trade union officials, who were the last defendants in one of South Africa's largest political show trials, are acquitted of treason after the judge throws out a key part of the state's case. The trial in Pietermaritzburg, which began 13 months ago, was one of two in which the government sought to hamstring the UDF by charging more than three dozen of its leaders and their trade union allies with treason. It ended abruptly when the prosecution conceded its case had collapsed when the presiding judge declared that the state had failed to establish that audio and video tapes accurately represented records of political meetings both within and outside South Africa at which the defendants spoke or appeared.

24/06/86 Two bombs explode in a fast-food restaurant and outside a hotel in Johannesburg, wounding 17 people. A third explosion is reported in Soweto's Jabulani Stadium, where Inkatha leader Chief Buthelezi was scheduled to address a rally. The attacks, blamed on the ANC, seem to deepen a sense of crisis since the authorities issued the decree

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:11

June 1986

declaring a national state of emergency on 12 June. Since the state of emergency, bomb attacks have become more frequent and the attackers appear increasingly willing to hit civilian targets.

24/06/86 A senior British government official, Minister of State at the Foreign Office Lynda Chalker, meets with acting ANC President Oliver Tambo in London. The meeting is seen as a turning point in British government policy toward the group; British Prime Minister Thatcher has previously refused to meet with ANC leaders unless the group renounced violence.

24/06/86 The South African Air Force announces a military exercise called Operation Golden Eagle. Air force bases in the North Transvaal and the Kruger National Park area will be involved in the operation, which will last from 25 to 30 June.

25/06/86 Government authorities threaten further action today against journalists deemed to be violating regulations imposed under the emergency decree. Minister of Information Louis Nel says that this could include the closing of local newspapers. The regulations on journalists forbid the reporting of activities of the security forces anywhere in the country and make it an offense to report what are called "subversive statements." Since the emergency was declared on 12 June, three foreign journalists have been ordered out of South Africa.

25/06/86 Parliament finishes approving a major package of reforms in some of the key elements of the apartheid system. In the past week, the government has abolished 34 separate acts that together constitute the pass laws, and another bill restores South African citizenship to about 20 percent of those blacks who lost it when the tribal homelands were

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:12

June 1986

declared independent by the government. Also approved is a bill giving urban blacks a limited increase in local self-government. The reforms illustrate the dilemma of the government--while these measures have cost the government further support on its white right flank, they have not attracted any noticeable backing from black leaders, who generally deride them as too little and too late.

29/06/86 South African authorities, seeming to favor some black factions over others, permit thousands of Zulus to crowd a sports stadium in Soweto for a rally addressed by their leader, Chief Buthelezi. The rally coincides with reports of a crackdown on black labor activists and official acknowledgement of continued violence. It is the first time the Zulu leader has addressed a public rally in Soweto in almost 2 years.

Zambia

04/06/86 Reports in the capital, Lusaka, indicate that the remnants of the South African-trained Mushala gang have regrouped in the northwest, unleashing a fresh wave of terror. The terrorists have reappeared several years after their gang leader, Adamson Mushala, was gunned down in 1982 by Zambian security forces after 7 years of eluding capture. The government claims that South Africa is training the terrorists with the intention of destabilizing the Kaunda regime.

14/06/86 President Kaunda declares a partial military mobilization in view of what he fears is an impending massive military attack by South Africa. He also reveals that nine white South Africans have been held since the South African raids on an alleged guerrilla base near Lusaka last month.

Zimbabwe

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:13

June 1986

05/06/86 Taking action to avoid a potential new blot on his often-criticized human rights record, Prime Minister Mugabe orders the release of Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) Chairman Michael Auret and the Commission's acting director, Nicholas Ndebele. Both men had been arrested in late May for political reasons as part of a campaign led by powerful Home Affairs Minister Enos Nkala against the internationally respected JPC because of the latter's alleged contribution to an Amnesty International report charging that hundreds of people have been arrested and tortured for political reasons in Matabeleland. Ironically, Auret has frequently acknowledged that while serious human rights abuses do occur, the government usually takes corrective action.

13/06/86 Sources report that two former Zimbabwean Army officers, Nicholas Nkomo and Tshaka Moyo, who were arrested in early 1982 on allegations of plotting to overthrow the government, were released on the orders of the High Court. Although they were acquitted of charges of treason in 1983, they were immediately redetained, despite recommendations by the Detention Review Tribunal to free them. Lookout Masuku, who had been arrested at the same time, died in April following his release from detention. One other detainee, Dumiso Dabengwe, the head of military intelligence for the guerrilla wing of the Zimbabwe African People's Union who supposedly has links with the Soviet KGB, is still being held in Chikurubi prison outside Harare.

West Africa

Ghana

06/22/86 Seven persons plotting to overthrow the Rawlings regime last fall are executed by firing squad. Guilty verdicts against the seven, who include five civilians and two members of the armed forces, were returned in May.

Guinea

22/06/86 French Minister of Cooperation Michel Aurillac signs a new cooperation agreement between France and Guinea. French aid to Guinea represents four percent of France's overall assistance to developing countries and places Guinea second

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:14

June 1986

on the list of countries receiving aid from France. Clearly, the amount of French aid earmarked for Guinea is indicative of the very high priority that France is giving to its relations with Conakry and to bringing Guinea back into the fold of relatively prosperous, moderate francophone states.

Guinea Bissau

01/06/86 For the second time in a month, an organizer of the unsuccessful November 1985 coup attempt, former Fire Brigade Chief Caraco Zacarias de Antonio Pereira, dies in prison, reportedly after a long illness. His death follows that of his alleged co-conspirator, Colonel Forena Bitnoff, who was reported to have died on 2 May. Despite his image as a pragmatic and moderate Marxist leader, President Pereira shows little leniency for those who oppose his regime, as it has now become common for political prisoners to die in jail.

Liberia

06/06/86 President Samuel Doe declares a general amnesty for all political prisoners who were detained following the unsuccessful November 1985 coup attempt directed against his regime. This action releases from prison former Finance Minister Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, whose detainment has focused much international criticism on the Doe government, particularly from the United States.

Nigeria

16/06/86 President Babangida leaves Nigeria for a 5-day trip to Niger and Ivory Coast. This will be Babangida's first official trip abroad since seizing power in August 1985. His visit to Niger is expected to include talks on relations between the two countries following the re-opening of their borders in February 1986.

SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL-MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS  
IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

PAGE:15

June 1986

24/06/86 The government endorses the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) protocol on the free movement of persons within the Community. The protocol permits citizens of ECOWAS members to live and work in a second country without visas and work permits. Nigerian ratification was expected in light of the election of a Nigerian to preside over ECOWAS in the coming year. However, it represents a sharp departure from Nigerian policy over the past 2 years, during which the government ordered the expulsion of close to one million ECOWAS aliens.